

REMARKS

- Claims 1 to 42 are currently pending
- Claims 1 and 26 have been amended herein
- Claim 25 has been canceled without prejudice
- Claim 1 is independent

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 6 TO 21, & 27 TO 42 UNDER 35 USC § 103

In response to the rejections of claims 1, 6 to 21, and 27 to 42 as being unpatentable over Tan (WO 02.15255 A1) in view of Uehara et al (US 6,199,563) claim 1 has been amended to include a limitation similar to original claim 25, purging at least one opening within each of said silicon carbide materials using an inert gas stream during ultrasonication of said silicon carbide materials in the aqueous solution. Claims 6 to 21 and 27 to 42 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1. It will be explained in section IV, why it is believed that the amendment makes the claims eligible for allowance.

II. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 2 & 3 UNDER 35 USC § 103

In response to the rejections of claims 2 and 3 as being unpatentable over Tan (WO 02.15255 A1) in view of Uehara et al (US 6,199,563) as applied to claims 1, 6 to 21, and 27 to 42 above and further in view of Applicant's admitted prior art (AAPA) the claims have been amended to include a limitation similar to original claim 25, purging at least one opening within each of said silicon carbide materials using an inert gas stream during ultrasonication of said silicon carbide materials in the aqueous solution. It will be explained in section IV, why it is believed the amendment makes the claims eligible for allowance.

III. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 4 & 5 UNDER 35 USC § 103

In response to the rejections of claims 2 and 3 as being unpatentable over Tan (WO 02.15255 A1) in view of Uehara et al (US 6,199,563) as applied to claims 1, 6 to 21, and 27 to 42 above and further in view of Kitabatake (US 6273,950) the claims have been amended to include a limitation similar to original claim 25, purging at least one opening within each of said silicon carbide materials using an inert gas stream during ultrasonication of said silicon carbide materials in the aqueous solution. It will be explained in section IV, why it is believed the amendment makes the claims eligible for allowance.

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IV. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 25 & 26 UNDER 35 USC § 103

Claims 25 and 26 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tan (WO 02/15225 A1, herein referred to as "Tan") in view of Uehara et al US patent number 6,199,563 (herein referred to as Uehara) as applied to claims 1, 6-21, and 27-42 above, and further in view of Lu et al US patent number 6,352,081 (herein referred to as "Lu") or Laube US patent number 5,660,640 (herein referred to as "Laube"). In response thereto, claim 25 has been canceled without prejudice and similar limitations included in the now amended claim 1. Claim 26 has been amended to depend from the amended claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that as amended claims 1 and 26 are allowable for the following reasons.

Amended claims 1 and 26 allow for purging of the silicon carbide material with an inert gas stream while the silicon

carbide material is being cleaned in the aqueous solution.
Purging while under going the wet clean treatment in aqueous solution may be used, for example as "to prevent migration of aqueous solution up to anodized aluminum base through capillary action" as described in the specification on page 11 lines 15-17. The concept is further illustrated in Figure 6 of the application under examination where the face of a showerhead 620 is immersed in an aqueous solution and a nitrogen stream 612 is fed from the backside to prevent the aqueous solution from traversing through the showerhead holes to the anodized aluminum base 602 of the shower head.

By contrast the Lu and Laube references describe the baking or drying of an article in an oven in conjunction with a nitrogen purge (col. 5 line 55 to col. 6 line 5 of Laube and col. 9 lines 20-45 of Lu). In Lu and Laube, the article is not undergoing a wet clean at the time of the nitrogen purge. Furthermore, Lu and Laube do not mention applying the gas stream to an opening. The Lu and Laube references are, therefore, not relevant to amended claims 1 and 26 of the application under examination and it is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

Claims 2 to 24 and 26 to 42 ultimately depend from the amended claim 1. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2 to 24 and 26 to 42 are allowable for at least the same reasons given above in support of the patentability of the amended claim 1.

V. CONCLUSION

Applicants believe the claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the same. Applicants do not believe any additional

fees are due regarding this Amendment. However, if any additional fees are required, please charge Deposit Account No. 04-1696 for such fees.

Respectfully Submitted,



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